

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for ordering items comprising a database having a various kinds of masters, and a server which controls data communication with a plurality of terminals via a network and
5 performs extracting or storing to the various kinds of masters in response to the terminal,

wherein the database comprising:

- a merchandise master which stores information on items offered from dealers to customers by each item number unique to
10 the item, and

- a merchandise assortment (MD) related master which stores a list of traded items among the items stored in the merchandise master agreed upon between the customer and dealer beforehand as the customer specific MD related information by each purchasing
15 unit of the customer and by each dealer who offers the item to the customer,

- wherein the server comprising an item specific order controller for specifying, for each item, a dealer who offers each item in the ordering request, based on the MD related
20 information of each purchasing unit, when it receive an ordering request for ordering one or more items from the terminal used by a user who belongs to the purchasing unit.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the server further comprising:

- a deliverer specific controller for specifying a deliverer who, when the ordering request is received from the terminal used by a user in the purchasing unit, delivers an item to the
5 user separately for each item number based on the MD related information for each of the purchasing unit, and

- a dealer data outputting controller for outputting, to the terminal used by the deliverer, the dealer data used for

delivering the item from the deliverer specified for the item to
10 the user in the name of the dealer specified for each item.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein the MD related master stores the MD for each of the dealers in a state in which item numbers purchased by the customer are not duplicated by a plurality of dealers.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein if the item number to be purchased by the customer is duplicated by a plurality of dealers, the MD related master has a dealer decision items such as delivery time, price, or dealer priority rank for specifying
5 a dealer according to the item number,

wherein the item specific ordering controller comprising a dealer duplication time specification function, and if the item number of an item requested for ordering is duplicated by dealers when the order request is received by the user who
10 belongs to the purchasing unit, the function specifies a dealer for the item according to the dealer decision item of the item number.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein the item specific ordering controller comprising an approval standard specific ordering control function for the case where the approval standard on ordering items is determined by the customer, when one or more
5 items are selected by a user of the customer, and if the approval standards of the selected items and the items to be added newly are different, the function prompting ordering grouped by the same approval standard without accepting the addition of new items.

6. An application service provider system (ASP) for issuing/receiving orders which provide an order issuing/receiving function to the terminals of one or more users who belong to the customer's purchasing unit, and provide an
5 order issuing/receiving function to the terminals of a plurality

of dealers who offer items identified by an item number to the customer,

the ASP system comprising:

10 a database storing various kinds of masters such as the merchandise master where information on items is stored, and

a server which is connected to the browsing terminals via a network, such as the Internet and extracts or stores data of the various kinds of masters in response to requests at the browsing terminals,

15 wherein the server including:

an MD maintenance controller for provides to the dealers' browsing terminals a function for maintaining the MD related information which is a list of items among the items registered in the merchandise master offered to the customer pre-determined
20 for the customer's purchasing unit and the dealer,

MD storing controller which controls storing, online or offline to the database, the MD related information maintained by the dealer as the MD related information master, and

a dealer specific controller which provides to the user's
25 browsing terminal a function which, in ordering one or more items from the terminal of a user who belongs to the purchasing unit, specifies a dealer who sells the goods or service for each item number by referring to the MD related information for each purchasing unit to which the user belong.

7. The system in the claim 6, wherein the MD related information master is stored in a state in which no item number of the items purchased by the customer's purchasing unit is duplicated by the dealers.

8. A computer program product having a record medium for controlling issuing/receiving orders by using a server of an ordering system, wherein the system comprising a database which records various kinds of masters such as the merchandise master

5 storing item related information, and the server which controls data communication with terminals via a network and performs data extraction from or storing to the various kinds of the masters upon request,

the program causes the server to:

10 manages the MD related information which is one of the pre-determined items traded between customer and dealer pre-determined for each dealer who sells items to the customer by the customer's purchasing unit,

when a request of ordering one or more items from a
15 terminal used by a user who belongs to the purchasing unit, identifies for each item number a dealer who offers the goods or service by referring to the MD related information for the purchasing unit.

9. A system for facilitating distribution consisting of a commerce channel and physical logistics, wherein the system comprising a database which memorizes various kinds of masters and a server which controls data communication with terminals
5 via a network and performs data extraction or storing of the various kinds of masters,

wherein the database comprising:

an MD unit master defined with a purchasing unit which is a user or customer's management unit, and dealers who offers an
10 item which is goods or services to the user of the customer as primary keys, and stores an MD unit which identifies the merchandise assortment (MD) of the items offered from the dealer to the purchasing unit,

an MD master storing the MD data having items belonging to
15 the MD identified by the MD unit and the item attribute information on distribution of the item such as the supplier and deliverer,

a merchandise master which stores the attribute information of each item itself such as the specification and supplier of the item for each item number of the items, and

a commerce channel management master which stores the commerce channel management information on the middle distributors such as a wholesaler according to the relationship among the dealer, supplier, and deliverer,

wherein the server comprising:

an MD unit specifying unit for specifying an MD unit group that can be ordered for each user or customer management unit by referring to the MD unit master,

a dealer specifying unit for specifying, based on the MD data for every specified plural number of MD units and the item numbers selected by the user for ordering, a unique dealer who sells the items among a group of dealers who trade with the customer the user belongs to,

an MD data extractor for extracting a unique MD data from the MD master for each item number among each of the MD data of the MD unit group specified by every corresponding item number based on the item number input from the user for ordering,

a supplier/deliverer specifying unit for specifying a supplier and a deliverer of the item based on the extracted MD data,

a deal supporting unit for specifying a commerce channel from the supplier to the dealer by referring to the commerce channel management master according to the combination of supplier, deliverer, and dealer and facilitates procurement/sales processing in the commerce channel, and

a delivery controller for controlling of delivering the items from the deliverer to the user in the name of the dealer.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein the server comprising a login controller for requesting, when accessed from the user, an input

of a user ID, a password, and a customer management unit ID that identify the user,

- 5 wherein the MD unit specifying unit comprising a function that specifies MD unit group, based on the user ID or the customer management unit ID input in response to the login controller, shows a list of items offered to the user by each dealer.

11. The system of claim 9, wherein the server comprising an ordering controller that performs a control of storing temporarily the item numbers of one or more items ordered by the user as an ordered item number group,

- 5 wherein, the dealer specifying unit comprising a function to specify a unique dealer in the dealer group based on the MD unit of the item specified by the item number of the ordered item number group stored in the ordering controller.

12. The system of claim 11, wherein the item specific ordering controller comprising an approval standard specific ordering control function for the case where the approval standard for ordering items is determined by the customer, if one or more

- 5 items are selected for ordering by a user of the customer, and the approval standards of the selected item and the items to be added newly are different, the function prompts ordering grouped by the same approval standard without accepting addition of new items.

13. The system of claim 11, wherein the order controller comprising a function for controlling reception of the confirmed order of the ordered item number group from the user or another user such as an approver,

- 5 wherein the supplier/deliverer specifying unit comprising a function that, when a confirmed order is received by the ordering controller, refers to the MD data identified by the MD unit of the dealer specified by the dealer specifying unit to

the user for each item number of the ordered item number group
10 of the confirmed order and specifies a supplier and a deliverer
of the item number,

wherein the dealing facilitating unit comprising a function
that, according to this combination of a
supplier/deliverer/dealer of the item number specified by this
15 supplier/deliverer specifying unit, refers to the commerce
channel management master and specifies uniquely the commerce
channel of the middle distributors from the supplier to the
dealer.

14. An apparatus for generating an MD related information used
in a distribution facilitating system, wherein the distribution
facilitating system is equipped with a database which memorizes
various kinds of masters such as the merchandise master that
5 stores information on items such as goods or service offered by
a supplier and delivered or offered by a deliverer, and a server
which controls data communication with terminals via a network
and performs data extraction from or storing to the various
kinds of masters in response to request,

10 the apparatus comprising:

a merchandising data generator, with a dealer who tries to
conclude with a periodic purchase contract of standard items
with a customer generates as merchandising data a list of items
and prices proposed as the sales targets for the customer based
15 on the merchandise master by using a terminal of the dealer,

an MD unit ID provider that, when a list of items as
purchase targets is specified by the customer according to the
merchandising data generated by this merchandising data
generator, gives an MD unit ID to the MD agreed upon between the
20 dealer and customer,

a supplier/deliverer specifying unit that specifies a supplier and a deliverer of each item which belongs to the MD identified by the MD unit ID given by this MD unit ID provider,

an MD storing unit that stores the supplier and deliverer specified by this supplier/deliverer specifying unit by each item of the MD unit,

a middle distributor storing unit that stores middle distributors such as a wholesaler according to the relationship between the supplier specified by the supplier/deliverer specifying unit and the dealer, and

an item number duplication checker that, when an MD is stored by the MD storing unit and an item is duplicated with another dealer for the customer, outputs an item number duplication error.

15. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the MD unit storing unit comprising a user specific MD unit storing function, and when there a plurality of MD units for the customer, this function stores the MD unit for every user which becomes a purchasing unit of the customer.

16. The apparatus of claim 14, further comprising a price related information storing unit which stores for every item or item group the price related information of each item such as price factor on the procurement / sales relationship from the dealer to the supplier.

17. The apparatus of claim 14, further comprising:

a new item time merchandise master updating unit that, when trying to store to the MD an item not stored in the merchandise master, performs control to store the item newly to the merchandise master, and

a original item number flag storing unit that, when an item updated by this new item time merchandise master updating unit is the original of the dealer, stores an original item number

flag to the merchandise master for prohibiting the use of the
10 item in other dealers' MDs.

18. A method for generating an MD related information, the
method comprising:

generating a list of items and prices as merchandising data
proposed for a customer based on an merchandise master by using
5 terminal of dealer who tries to conclude with a periodic
purchase contract of standard items with the customer,

defining an MD unit, when a list of items that the customer
purchases periodically is specified according to the
merchandising data, for identifying the merchandise assortment
10 (MD) for each purchasing unit such as the customer's user,

storing a supplier and a deliverer on each item contained
in the MD identified by the defined MD unit,

defining middle commerce channel distributors from the
supplier to dealer based on the relationship among the supplier,
15 deliverer, and dealer stored in the supplier/deliverer storing
step,

storing the supplier and deliverer for each item of the MD
unit, and

if any item number is duplicated with another dealer for
20 the customer when an MD is stored in this MD storing process,
outputting an item number duplication error.

19. An apparatus for checking the consistency of MD related
information which defines a list of item numbers of an MD
consisting of items such as goods and services offered to the
customer and the attribute information on distribution of the
5 items such as supplier and deliverer for each item of the MD,

the apparatus comprising:

an item number checker that checks whether each item number
in the MD specified by the MD related information is stored in
the merchandise master or not,

10 an item number duplication checker that checks whether each item number contained in the MD unit data is stored in another MD related information for the customer or not, and

15 an item attribute data checker that checks whether a deliverer who delivers each item of the MD to the customer, a supplier who has a stock of the item, and a price determination method of the item to the customer is stored or not.

20. The apparatus of claim 19, further comprising an expense item checker that checks whether an expense item used for budget control or accounting management defined separately for each user of the customer of the item in storing the MD data is stored or not.

21. A data structure of MD related master data used in an ordering system, wherein the ordering system comprising a database that memorizes various kinds of masters and a server that is connected with a specified terminal via a network and performs data extraction or storing to the various kinds of masters upon requests from the terminal,

the MD related master data are stored in the database and are used for specifying a dealer who deals with items ordered by the user through an order issuing/receiving process on the server, and this MD related master data are equipped with the following:

an MD unit data group showing a list of MDs defined by every purchasing unit of the dealer and the customer, and

15 an MD data group that stores for each of this MD units the information on distribution of items which belong to the MD unit,

wherein if a plurality of MD units are defined for the purchasing unit, they are defined under the condition that items which can be handled for the purchasing unit in the plural number of MD units are not duplicated among the MD units.